

Western Response to Terrorism: Change and Continuity Over Time*

Task 1: Speech Analysis

Included here are six official government responses in Europe to attacks by various discontented groups in Europe (earliest is 1605 latest is November 13, 2015). The words in these speeches/responses are deliberately chosen before spoken in order to send a specific message to those hearing/reading it.

1. In your groups, look over the six documents provided. Highlight and underline words, phrases, and ideas that are similar across the documents (across one or two, across documents in the same time frame, across documents that span several hundred years).
2. Make a list of common words/themes/phrases so that you can more easily examine them.
3. Highlight and make a list of key differences that you find in the documents over time. What might account for these changes?
4. Look over your words and for your question below, write a paragraph that includes a claim, specific evidence (in the form of a quotation of a word or phrase) and interpretation (explanation of why you think those words indicate this concept)

Question:

What changes and continuities exist in regard to the impact of marginalized groups (marginalized either for political, social, economic reason) and official government reaction to their discontent.

Document A

French PM Francois Hollande's speech

As I speak, terrorist attacks of unprecedented proportions are underway in the Paris area. There are dozens killed, there are many injured. It is a horror. We have, on my decision, mobilised all forces possible to neutralise the terrorists and make all concerned areas safe. I have also asked for military reinforcements. They are currently in the Paris area, to ensure that no new attack can take place. I have also called a cabinet meeting that will be held in a few minutes.

Two decisions will be taken: a state of emergency will be declared, which means that some places will be closed, traffic may be banned, and there will also be searches which may be decided throughout Ile de France (greater Paris). The state of emergency will be proclaimed throughout the territory (of France). The second decision I have made is to close the borders. We must ensure that no one enters to commit any crimes and that those who have committed the crimes that we have unfortunately seen can also be arrested if they should leave the territory.

This is a terrible ordeal which once again assails us. We know where it comes from, who these criminals are, who these terrorists are. In these difficult moments, we must – and I'm thinking of the many victims, their families and the injured – show compassion and solidarity. But we must also show unity and calm. Faced with terror, France must be strong, it must be great and the state authorities must be firm. We will be. We must also call on everyone to be responsible.

What the terrorists want is to scare us and fill us with dread. There is indeed reason to be afraid. There is dread, but in the face of this dread, there is a nation that knows how to defend itself, that knows how to mobilise its forces and, once again, will defeat the terrorists. French citizens, we have not completed the operations. There are still some that are extremely difficult. It's at this moment that the security forces are staging an assault, especially in a place in Paris. I ask you to keep all your trust in what we can do with the security forces to protect our nation from terrorist acts. Long live the Republic. Long live France.

Document B

Tony Blair (British Prime Minister) on Terrorist Bombing attacks on London in 2005

Text of the statement

It's reasonably clear that there have been a series of terrorist attacks in London. There are obviously casualties, both people that have died and people seriously injured. My thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families.

It's my intention to leave the G8 within the next couple hours and go down to London and get a report face to face with the police and the emergency services from those who have been dealing with this.

Each of the countries around that table have some experience of the effects of terrorism and share our complete resolution to defeat this terrorism. It's particularly barbaric that this has happened on the day when people are meeting to try to help the problems of poverty in Africa and the long-term problems of climate changes in the environment.

It's reasonably clear that it is designed and aimed to coincide with the opening of the G8. There will be time to talk later about this. It's important, however, that those engaged in terrorism realize that our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people in a desire to impose extremism on the world. Whatever they do, it is our determination that they will never succeed in destroying what we hold dear in this country and in other civilized nations throughout the world. Thank you.

Document C***George Bush on evening of September 11th attacks***

Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes or in their offices: secretaries, business men and women, military and federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror. The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge -- huge structures collapsing have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining. Today, our nation saw evil -- the very worst of human nature -- and we responded with the best of America. With the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington D.C. to help with local rescue efforts. Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks. The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business as well.

The search is underway for those who were behind these evil acts. I have directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance. America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.

Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a Power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23:

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are with me.

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night. And God bless America.

Document D

Austria Justifying Ultimatum after the Assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in June 1914

Since the recent Balkan crisis there has been a recrudescence of the spirit of conspiracy inherent in Serbian politicians, which has left such sanguinary imprints on the history of the kingdom; individuals belonging formerly to bands employed in Macedonia have come to place themselves at the disposal of the terrorist propaganda against Austria-Hungary.

In the presence of these doings, to which Austria-Hungary has been exposed for years, the Serbian Government have not thought it incumbent on them to take the slightest step. The Serbian Government have thus failed in the duty imposed on them by the solemn declaration of the 31st of March, 1909, and acted in opposition to the will of Europe and the undertaking given to Austria-Hungary.

The patience of the Imperial and Royal Government in the face of the provocative attitude of Serbia was inspired by the territorial disinterestedness of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the hope that the Serbian Government would end in spite of everything by appreciating Austria-Hungary's friendship at its true value.

By observing a benevolent attitude towards the political interests of Serbia, the Imperial and Royal Government hoped that the kingdom would finally decide to follow an analogous line of conduct on its own side. In particular, Austria-Hungary expected a development of this kind in the political ideas of Serbia, when, after the events of 1912, the Imperial and Royal Government, by its disinterested and ungrudging attitude, made such a considerable aggrandizement of Serbia possible.

The benevolence which Austria-Hungary showed towards the neighbouring State had no restraining effect on the proceedings of the kingdom, which continued to tolerate on its territory a propaganda of which the fatal consequences were demonstrated to the whole world on the 28th of June last, when the Heir Presumptive to the Monarchy and his illustrious consort fell victims to a plot hatched at Belgrade.

In the presence of this state of things the Imperial and Royal Government have felt compelled to take new and urgent steps at Belgrade with a view to inducing the Serbian Government to stop the incendiary movement that is threatening the security and integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The Imperial and Royal Government are convinced that in taking this step they will find themselves in full agreement with the sentiments of all civilized nations, who cannot permit regicide to become a weapon that can be employed with impunity in political strife, and the peace of Europe to be continually disturbed by movements emanating from Belgrade.

Source: Source Records of the Great War, Vol. I, ed. Charles F. Horne, National Alumni 1923

Document E

Simplified transcript: Government warning for one of the members of the Gunpowder Plot against Parliament November 5, 1605

Whereas one Thomas Percy, a bodyguard to the King is found to have been involved in one of the most horrible acts of Treason ever planned, that is, while the King, Queen, Prince, all the nobility and the commons were in the upper house, it was to be blown up with gunpowder (and for this purpose a great deal of powder was moved into a cellar under the house which was found there this morning), and Percy has now run away. These commands call our Officers and loyal subjects to willingly search for Percy and arrest him using all possible means, but keeping him alive, so we can discover the rest of the plotters. Percy is a tall man with a great broad beard and a good face. His beard and head is sprinkled with white hairs, however his head is whiter than his beard. He stoops slightly and has a good colour in his face as well as big feet and short legs. Given at the Palace of Westminster, the fifth of November 1605.

Document F

Statement by the President on the Situation in Paris (official White House Transcript on whitehouse.gov) 5:45 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening, everybody. I just want to make a few brief comments about the attacks across Paris tonight. Once again, we've seen an outrageous attempt to terrorize innocent civilians. This is an attack not just on

Paris, it's an attack not just on the people of France, but this is an attack on all of humanity and the universal values that we share.

We stand prepared and ready to provide whatever assistance that the government and the people of France need to respond. France is our oldest ally. The French people have stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States time and again. And we want to be very clear that we stand together with them in the fight against terrorism and extremism. Paris itself represents the timeless values of human progress. Those who think that they can terrorize the people of France or the values that they stand for are wrong. The American people draw strength from the French people's commitment to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. We are reminded in this time of tragedy that the bonds of liberté and égalité and fraternité are not only values that the French people care so deeply about, but they are values that we share. And those values are going to endure far beyond any act of terrorism or the hateful vision of those who perpetrated the crimes this evening.

We're going to do whatever it takes to work with the French people and with nations around the world to bring these terrorists to justice, and to go after any terrorist networks that go after our people... This is a heartbreaking situation. And obviously those of us here in the United States know what it's like. We've gone through these kinds of episodes ourselves. And whenever these kinds of attacks happened, we've always been able to count on the French people to stand with us. They have been an extraordinary counterterrorism partner, and we intend to be there with them in that same fashion. I'm sure that in the days ahead we'll learn more about exactly what happened, and my teams will make sure that we are in communication with the press to provide you accurate information. I don't want to speculate at this point in terms of who was responsible for this. It appears that there may still be live activity and dangers that are taking place as we speak. And so until we know from French officials that the situation is under control, and we have for more information about it, I don't want to speculate. Thank you very much.

Full text: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/11/13/statement-president-situation-paris>

